

## **Appendix E**

### **VIRGINIA TECH GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING ALERTING SYSTEM**

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The successful system would provide:

- Multi-modal communications;
  - text messaging (preferably using true Short Message Service [SMS] protocol)
  - Instant Messaging (IM)
  - e-mail
  - web posting
  - voice communication to cellular or land line based extensions (including ability to fax)
- Flexibility in “registering” or “subscribing” users;
  - ability to pre-load based on existing directory data with both APIs and online mechanisms for batch or manual updates
- Robust, but distributed data centers, i.e. more than one location; ability to send alerts even if event impacts vendor’s facility
- Robust, but dispersed messaging; concern is with saturation of communications channels (Part of “Lessons Learned” from 9/11 and previous incident in Blacksburg on first day of Fall Semester 2006; “too much, too soon” will quickly overwhelm cellular and land line telephony systems)
- The vendor would have to be flexible in terms of contracting, and willing to collaborate on further developing the product’s features to meet specific needs identified by Virginia Tech.